

EV 223813241 US

CLAIMS

1. An improvement to a folding serving tray wherein when said folding serving tray is assembled for use, the improvement comprises:

a center panel and four generally upright panels disposed around a portion of said center panel that form a three-dimensional space over said center panel that is adapted to receive an item therein;

a beverage extension section adapted for holding a beverage that is disposed outside of said three-dimensional space; and wherein said beverage extension section includes a beverage support member that is disposed under a beverage opening; and

wherein all of said folding serving tray is formed from a single piece of substantially flat stock that is then cut and folded into an open position ready for use.

2. An improvement to a folding serving tray wherein when said folding serving tray is assembled for use, the improvement comprises:

a center panel and four generally upright panels disposed around a portion of said center panel that form a three-dimensional space over said center panel that is adapted to receive an item therein;

a beverage extension section adapted for holding a beverage that is disposed outside of said three-dimensional space; and wherein said beverage extension section includes a beverage support member that is disposed under a beverage opening;

locking means for securing at least one panel to another panel; and

wherein all of said folding serving tray is formed from a single piece of substantially flat stock that is then cut and folded into an open position ready for use.

3. An improvement to a folding serving tray wherein when said folding serving tray is assembled for use, the improvement comprises:

locking means for securing at least one panel to another panel.

4. The improved folding serving tray of claim 3 wherein said locking means includes a tab extending from said at least one panel, said tab including an outer portion that is disposed maximally away from said at least one panel, said outer portion being attached to one end of an intermediate member, said intermediate member including an opposite end that is attached to said at least one panel, and wherein said outer portion includes a length that is greater than said intermediate member and wherein said tab is adapted to enter into a locking opening in said another panel.

5. The improved folding serving tray of claim 4 wherein said locking opening further includes a first elongated portion and an adjoining second shorter portion and wherein said first elongated portion includes a length that is greater than said second shorter portion, and wherein said length of said elongated portion is sufficient to allow said outer portion of said locking tab to pass through said locking opening at said first elongated portion so that all of said outer portion extends beyond said another panel and wherein

said shorter portion includes a length that is less than necessary to allow said outer portion of said locking tab to pass through said shorter portion, and wherein said locking tab is adapted to be urged toward said shorter portion an amount that is sufficient to dispose a nose portion of said outer portion beyond said shorter portion sufficient to prevent said outer portion of said locking tab from passing through said shorter portion of said locking opening.

6. A folding serving tray made from a flat stock of material, comprising:

(a) a center panel;

(b) four sidewalls that extend upward with respect to said center panel, each of said sidewalls being attached at each end to another of said sidewalls, said four sidewalls forming a three-dimensional structure that is open on the top and closed on the bottom and which is adapted to receive an item to be served therein;

(c) an extension of said center panel that extends beyond one of said four sidewalls; said extension of

said center panel adapted to receive a beverage therein; and

(d) locking means for securing at least one portion of at least one of said four sidewalls to said center panel or to another of said four sidewalls.

7. The folding serving tray of claim 6 including a gusset panel intermediate an end of one of said four sidewalls and at least a portion of said extension of said center panel.

8. The folding serving tray of claim 7 wherein said gusset panel is contiguous with respect to said end of said four sidewalls and said at least a portion of said extension of said center panel.

9. The folding serving tray of claim 8 wherein said gusset panel includes a substantially triangular shape.

10. The folding serving tray of claim 6 including a thumbhole in one of said four sidewalls.

11. The folding serving tray of claim 10 wherein said thumbhole is disposed closer to an end of said sidewall that is proximate said extension than to an end of said sidewall that is distally disposed with respect to said extension.

12. The folding serving tray of claim 10 wherein said thumbhole is disposed proximate a center of gravity of said tray when said tray is assembled and adapted to contain a typical assortment of items.

13. The folding serving tray of claim 10 including a second thumbhole that is disposed on a sidewall that is opposite said center panel with respect to said one of said four sidewalls that includes said thumbhole.

14. The folding serving tray of claim 13 wherein said thumbhole or said second thumbhole is adapted for placement of a thumb therein and a remaining one of said thumbhole or said second thumbhole is adapted to retain a napkin therein.

15. The folding serving tray of claim 6 wherein said extension of said center panel includes a beverage opening adapted to receive said beverage therein and including a beverage support panel that is hingedly attached at each end of said beverage support member to one end of a first beverage support arm and one end of a second beverage support arm and wherein an opposite end of each of said first and second beverage support arms is hingedly attached to said extension, and wherein said beverage support panel is adapted to be pivoted to a location that is below said beverage opening.

16. The folding serving tray of claim 15 wherein when said beverage support panel is disposed below said beverage opening, said beverage support panel is adapted to contact a bottom of a beverage container that is placed in said beverage opening and wherein said beverage support panel is adapted to provide sufficient support to retain said beverage container in said folding serving tray.

17. The folding serving tray of claim 6 including at least one slot adapted to receive an end of an eating utensil therein.

18. The folding serving tray of claim 17 including a plurality of slots, each slot adapted to receive an end of an eating utensil.

19. The folding serving tray of claim 6 wherein said locking means includes a tab that is attached to said at least one of said four sidewalls and a locking opening that is attached to said center panel or to said another of said four sidewalls wherein said tab is adapted to be inserted in said locking opening and wherein said locking opening is adapted to retain said tab in a position of cooperation with respect to said locking opening.

20. The folding serving tray of claim 19 wherein said tab includes an outer portion that is disposed maximally away from said at least one panel, said outer portion being attached to one end of an intermediate member, said intermediate member including an opposite end that is attached to said at least one panel, and wherein said outer portion includes a length that is greater than said intermediate member and wherein said tab is adapted to enter into said locking opening in said another panel and wherein said locking opening further includes a first elongated



portion and an adjoining second shorter portion and wherein said first elongated portion includes a length that is greater than said second shorter portion, and wherein said length of said elongated portion is sufficient to allow said outer portion of said locking tab to pass through said locking opening at said first elongated portion so that all of said outer portion extends beyond said another panel and wherein said shorter portion includes a length that is less than necessary to allow said outer portion of said locking tab to pass through said shorter portion, and wherein said locking tab is adapted to be urged toward said shorter portion an amount that is sufficient to dispose a nose portion of said outer portion beyond said shorter portion sufficient to prevent said outer portion of said locking tab from passing through said shorter portion of said locking opening.